



## Commonwealth of Kentucky Public Protection Cabinet

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **State Fire Marshal Offers Reminders on Carbon Monoxide Safety**

***One-half of fire department calls on CO occur November-February***

**Frankfort, Ky.** (Nov. 14, 2013) – Kentucky Fire Marshal William Swope wants Kentuckians to be aware of the “silent killer” this winter heating season. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless and colorless gas that’s created when fuels like gas, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, and oil burn incompletely.

“In the home, heating and cooking equipment that burn fuels are potential sources of carbon monoxide,” said Swope. “The public should also understand that vehicles and generators left running in attached garages can produce dangerous levels of carbon monoxide.

“My advice is that if you need to warm up a car, remove it from the garage immediately after starting it. Don’t think that because the garage doors are open it’s safe,” he added. “Also, generators should be used in well-ventilated locations outdoors and away from windows, doors and vent openings.”

CO enters the body through breathing. Symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light headedness or headaches. High levels of CO can be fatal, causing death within minutes.

To protect your family from the harmful effects of CO, the National Fire Protection Association offers the following safety tips:

- Like smoke detectors, CO alarms should be installed in a central location outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home.
- Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer’s instructions.

- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the home is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until the arrival of emergency personnel.
- During and after a snowstorm, make sure vents for the dryer, furnace, stove and fireplace are clear of snow build-up.
- Gas or charcoal grills can produce CO — only use outside.

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